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Coordination programme and other questions: international cooperation in the field of informatics

Austria, Belgium, China, France, Germany, Ireland,* Italy, Lesotho, Luxembourg,* Nigeria,* Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The need to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States

The Economic and Social Council,

Aware of the interest of Member States in taking full advantage of information and communications technologies for the acceleration of economic and social development,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the need to harmonize and improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and access by all States, with due regard to all official languages,

Welcoming the report presented by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics on the progress achieved so far in fulfilling the Working Group's mandate,

1. *Reiterates once again* the high priority that it attaches to easy, economical, uncomplicated and unhindered access for States Members of the United Nations, observers and non-governmental organizations accredited to the United Nations to the computerized databases and information systems and services of the United Nations, provided that the unhindered access of non-governmental organizations shall not prejudice the access of Member States and that it shall not impose an additional financial burden for the use of databases and other systems;

2. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to convene the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics for one more year to enable it to carry out, from within existing resources, its work of facilitating the successful

* In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

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implementation of the initiatives being taken by the Secretary-General with regard to the use of information technology and of continuing the implementation of measures required to achieve its objectives; in this regard, the Working Group is requested to continue:

(a) To improve electronic connectivity via the Internet for all Member States in their capitals and at major United Nations locations, *inter alia*, through the enhanced connectivity of permanent missions to the Internet and the United Nations databases;

(b) To improve the access of Member States to a wider range of United Nations information on economic and social, development and political issues and other substantive programming areas, and to have all official documents available via the Internet;

(c) To improve electronic links among Member States, the United Nations and the specialized agencies;

(d) To provide training for the staff of permanent missions to enable them to take advantage of the facilities being developed for Member States, in particular electronic mail and Internet web sites;

(e) To enhance the capacity of Member States to access United Nations data on-line, using low-cost telecommunications links or providing other modalities, for example, CD-ROM, whereby Member States can have access to specialized databases not available on the Internet;

(f) To make arrangements, as appropriate, to provide permanent missions of developing countries with hardware platform to utilize Internet technology;

(g) To use videoconferencing to further communication and interaction between the United Nations, permanent missions and academic institutions;

(h) To intensify contacts with the private sector so as to bring the latter's wealth of experience to bear on the work of the Working Group;

3. *Notes with appreciation* the fact that the efforts of the Working Group to draw the attention of Member States to the threat posed by the millennium bug were successful and that, as a result, international cooperation to address the problem of the millennium bug also had successful results;

4. *Supports* the efforts of the Working Group to keep the network of national focal points that was established in connection with the millennium bug initiative intact as a vehicle for the diffusion of best practices and lessons learned, in particular for the exchange of information on locally and regionally appropriate solutions and, in this regard, appeals to countries and other sources to provide the extrabudgetary resources necessary to maintain the mailing list of the national focal points;

5. *Reiterates* the request made in the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of its current session,[1] that the Working Group make recommendations regarding the proposal contained in paragraph 11 of the report of the high-level panel of experts on information and communication technology,[2]

[1] E/2000/L.9, para. 18.
[2] A/55/75-E/2000/55.

convened from 17 to 20 April 2000, that the United Nations should create a task force on information and communication technologies;

6. *Requests* the Working Group to make recommendations to the Bureau of the Council on how the Council can carry out the tasks specified in paragraph 15 of the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment,[3] for the enhancement of the United Nations role in promoting synergies and coherence of all efforts directed towards expanding the development impact of information and communication technologies;

7. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to extend full cooperation to the Working Group and to give priority to implementing its recommendations;

8. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2001 on the follow-up action taken on the present resolution, including the findings of the Working Group.

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[3] E/2000/L.9.